IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered). Please AMEND claims 1-11 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information-gathering method employed in an information-gathering system for holding dialogues with customers based on dialogue scenarios, the information-gathering method comprising:

storing dialogue scenarios;

assigning correspondences between the dialogue scenarios and destination addresses;

extracting from the dialogue scenarios a dialogue scenario to be performed;

holding a dialogue with a customer following the dialogue scenario;

acquiring dialogue content from the dialogue;

transmitting the dialogue content to ~~a~~ <u>the</u> destination ~~address~~ <u>addresses</u> corresponding to the dialogue scenario;

storing the dialogue content received at the destination ~~address~~ <u>addresses</u>; and

outputting the dialogue content ~~that was stored~~ <u>at the destination addresses corresponding to the dialogue scenario</u>.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information-gathering device for holding dialogues with customers based on dialogue scenarios, the information-gathering device comprising:

<u>a</u> dialogue scenario storage ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ storing dialogue scenarios;

<u>a</u> scenario storage ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ <u>storing and</u> assigning correspondences between the dialogue scenarios and destination addresses;

<u>an</u> extraction ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ extracting from the dialogue scenarios a dialogue scenario to be performed;

<u>a</u> dialogue ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ holding a dialogue with a customer following the dialogue scenario;

<u>a</u> content acquiring ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ acquiring dialogue content from the dialogue; and

<u>an</u> information transmission ~~means~~ <u>unit</u> ~~for~~ transmitting the dialogue content to the

destination ~~address~~ addresses corresponding to the dialogue scenario.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2, further comprising:

customer information storage ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ assigning correspondences between customer-identifying data and customer information;

customer-specifying ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ accepting input of the customer-identifying data; and

processing ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ extracting from said customer information storage means, corresponding customer information corresponding to the customer-identifying data input using the customer-specifying ~~means~~ unit and ~~for~~ associating the corresponding customer information with the dialogue content.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2, further comprising dialogue storage ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ storing the dialogue content.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2,

further comprising merchandise-specifying ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ accepting input of merchandise identification data for identifying merchandise,

wherein said scenario storage ~~means~~ unit correspondingly assigns to the dialogue scenarios merchandise identification data and stores as the destination addresses communications addresses for providers of the merchandise identified by the merchandise identification data;

wherein said extraction ~~means~~ unit extracts dialogue scenarios corresponding to input merchandise identification data; and

wherein said information transmission ~~means~~ unit transmits the dialogue content to the communications addresses corresponding to the merchandise identification data.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2,

further comprising a merchandise name-specifying ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ accepting merchandise classification input,

wherein said scenario storage ~~means~~ unit further stores merchandise classifications and stores as the destination addresses communications addresses for providers of merchandise identified by the merchandise classifications;

wherein said extraction ~~means~~ unit extracts a dialogue scenario corresponding to an

input merchandise classification; and

wherein said information transmission ~~means~~ unit transmits the dialogue content to the communications addresses corresponding to the input merchandise classifications.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2, further comprising:

billing ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ determining billing totals regarding the dialogue content; and

notification ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ reporting the billing totals to the destination addresses for the dialogue content.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The information-gathering device set forth in claim 2, further comprising: compensation determining ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ determining compensation for the dialogue; and

compensation notification ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ reporting the compensation to the customer with whom the dialogue has been held.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable storage medium on which is recorded an information-gathering program utilized in an information-gathering device for holding dialogues with customers based on dialogue scenarios, the information-gathering program when executed controlling the information-gathering device to perform a method comprising:

storing dialogue scenarios;

assigning correspondences between the dialogue scenarios and destination addresses;

extracting from the dialogue scenarios a dialogue scenario to be performed;

holding a dialogue with a customer following the dialogue scenario;

acquiring dialogue content from the dialogue; and

transmitting the dialogue content to ~~a~~ the destination ~~address~~ addresses corresponding to the dialogue scenario.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An information-gathering computer program product enabling a computer to hold dialogues with customers based on dialogue scenarios, comprising:

a dialogue scenario storage ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ storing dialogue scenarios;

a scenario storage ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ assigning correspondences between the dialogue scenarios and destination addresses;

an extraction ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ extracting from the dialogue scenarios a dialogue scenario

4

to be performed;

a dialogue ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ holding a dialogue with a customer following the dialogue scenario;

a content acquiring ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ acquiring dialogue content from the dialogue; and

an information transmission ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ transmitting the dialogue content to the destination ~~address~~ addresses corresponding to the dialogue scenario.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer terminal comprising:

information-gathering ~~means~~ unit connected via a network to the information-gathering device set forth in claim 2, ~~for~~ gathering dialogue content transmitted from said information-gathering device;

information storage ~~means for~~ unit storing the gathered dialogue content; and

output ~~means~~ unit ~~for~~ outputting the stored dialogue content.

12-14 (CANCELLED)